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### **Environment Secretary Approves Variance for Old Santa Fe Landfill; City Saves More than \$1 Million**

(Santa Fe, NM) — New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Secretary Ron Curry has approved The City of Santa Fe's variance for its old landfill located on Paseo de las Vistas approximately 2.5 miles west-northwest of the Plaza in Santa Fe County. This variance allows the landfill to maintain side slopes steeper than what is allowed in state regulations. This allowance will save the City between \$1.2 and \$1.5 million in re-grading costs.

"I'd like to say that helping Santa Fe save this money was our Christmas gift to them, but it really isn't," said Secretary Curry. "We only approved this variance after a thorough review of the facts and a determination that human health and the environment will not be threatened by these slopes."

State regulations set the maximum landfill side slope angle at 4 to 1 to prevent erosion from allowing trash to surface. 55 percent of this landfill's side slope area is steeper, with a maximum slope of 3.33 to 1. Despite the steepness, NMED has found no evidence of erosion at this landfill and therefore granted the variance for one year.

The variance requires the City to provide monthly reports to NMED on side slope conditions. It also requires the City to install and monitor a precipitation gauge for the life of the variance. This is the fourth one-year variance that NMED has granted for this landfill.

This closed landfill received waste from 1969 to May 10, 1997.

"NMED believes in strong and consistent enforcement of environmental laws and regulations," said Secretary Curry. "That said, we are also pragmatists. If citizens and the environment can be protected in a way that saves a municipality money, then that is obviously the best choice for all involved."

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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